



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Auditor-Controller
Director of Children and Family Services

At its meeting held July 12, 2005, the Board took the following action:

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Supervisor Molina made the following statement:

“The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has an absolute responsibility to ensure that child fatalities involving youth from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) are thoroughly investigated, and that any and all steps are taken to prevent similar tragic events from occurring. It is for this reason that in 1996, the Board of Supervisors authorized the creation of an Inspector General position within the Auditor-Controller’s office. The Inspector General’s function is twofold. First, the Inspector General serves as an independent, impartial investigator of the deaths of children who were under the current or past jurisdiction of the Juvenile Dependency Court or who had current or past records within DCFS. Second, upon validation of information from the Dependency Court, County Counsel, DCFS staff and other County-employed attorneys, the Inspector General makes determinations and recommendations to help the Board of Supervisors take a proactive role in implementing policy and procedure changes to prevent similar tragedies from recurring.

“However, for several years, the Inspector General position has remained vacant. Moreover, since that time, I have become concerned with both the timeliness of the Inspector General’s investigative reports as well as with the role the Inspector General plays in strengthening DCFS’ internal auditing. As such, I believe we should explore the Office of Independent Review (OIR) model successfully utilized by our Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD).

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“Created by the Board of Supervisors in 2001, OIR is a civilian oversight agency mandated to enhance the integrity of LASD through meaningful civilian participation in and review of LASD’s internal investigations process. The OIR has successfully helped LASD conduct objective assessments of employee conduct, and review any policy or training issue that might be implicated; and the OIR has done so by being equipped with the tools of unfettered access to LASD records and personnel; the full support of LASD management; and the independence to represent the interests of the people of Los Angeles County without bias.”

Pat Mulcahey addressed the Board.

After discussion, on motion of Supervisor Molina, seconded by Supervisor Knabe, unanimously carried, the Director of Children and Family Services, in conjunction with the Auditor-Controller and in consultation with the Office Independent Review (OIR), was instructed to report back to the Board within 30 days with an implementation plan replicating the OIR model, successfully utilized by the Sheriff’s Department for review of the Department’s internal investigations process, in order to:

1. Ensure the integrity of Department of Children and Family Services’ internal investigations and translate investigative review findings into organizational policy and practice changes; and
2. Assist the Director of Children and Family Services and staff in implementing changes that will strengthen the Department of Children and Family Services’ internal processes.

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